



ALPHA GAMMA RHO
WHERE WE MAKE BETTER MEN

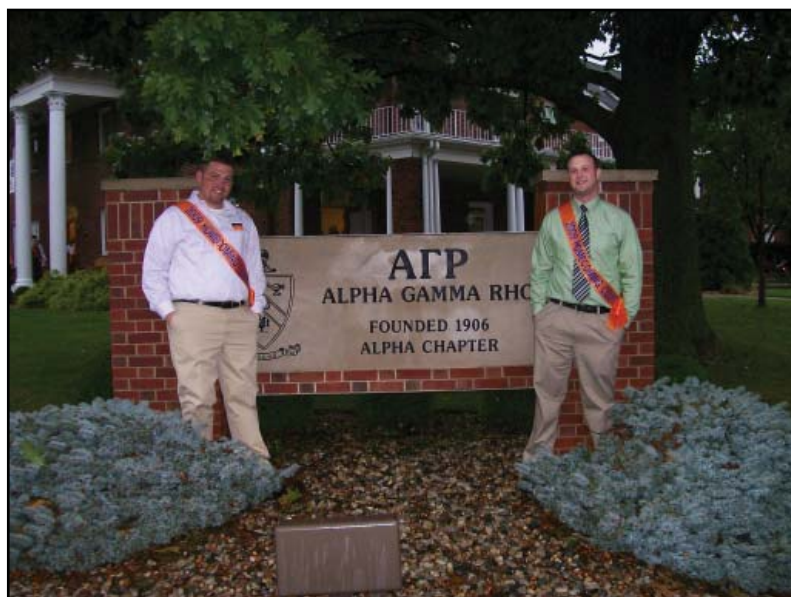
THE ALPHA CRESCENT

ALPHA CHAPTER • ALPHA GAMMA RHO
58 EAST GREGORY DRIVE • CHAMPAIGN, IL 61820



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
VOLUME 1011 • FALL 2009

HOMECOMING COURT 2009 *Written by Mitch Heisler*



*University of Illinois 2009 Homecoming Court: Alpha Chapter Senior Members
Mitch Heisler and John Wyss*

There have been few greater honors for me while at the University of Illinois than to represent Alpha Chapter, along with **John Wyss**, on the 2009 Illinois Homecoming Court.

There was a full slate of activities planned for us on Homecoming Weekend starting with a Comeback Reception mainly to

honor the three Illini Comeback Guests, which included the likes of a C-SPAN executive, Former Deputy Attorney General of the United States, and the inventor of K-Zone and the virtual First and 10 lines. Then the next day, even though it did “Rain on our Parade” we were still able to enjoy Alpha’s cook, Bill Pulcini’s, great food at the Pre-Parade Reception which is held annually at the chapter house. Last, but certainly not least, we had game day festivities which, included attending a breakfast hosted by then-current Chancellor Richard Herman and being recognized on the 50 yard line during halftime of the football game.

It was great to be able to meet members of the administrations, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as interact with the other members of Homecoming Court, many of whom I had met through various activities on campus. However, there was no moment that made me more proud than to stand in the Front Room at 58 E. Gregory Dr. as we hosted the Pre-Parade Reception for all of the distinguished guests and listen to all the compliments and other comments about how nice the house looked and how polite all the members were. It was a sense of pride that is hard to describe. I was proud of the fact that the house was clean, and that the members were polite but most importantly as I was simply proud to be a member of Alpha Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity.

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NOBLE RULERS REPORT



I hope this message finds you and your family doing well during this long and challenging fall. It has been tough being a football fan this year, but we are looking forward to a rewarding basketball season.

Over the past spring and summer months our recruitment chairs were actively recruiting new members to our Chapter. With their tireless effort, we were able to bring in a very successful new member class. Our new member class consists of 18 freshman and junior transfer students, from an array of agriculture backgrounds stemming from all parts of the state.

During the fall semester the undergraduate members had the opportunity to attend many career fairs on and off campus. Many of the members are seeking summer internships, but the members of the senior class are seeking full time employment or going on to attain a higher education. With the help of our alumni and advisors the professional image of Alpha Chapter at the career fairs and in interviews has increased greatly.

Homecoming this year was also a great success. We had the largest turn out to the chapter house since the 100th homecoming. Homecoming is always a great time for both the alumni and the undergraduates to get together and share experiences, network, and enjoy the brotherhood Alpha instills in all of us. This year, as in the past, we had two members on the University of Illinois Homecoming Court, **Mitch Heisler** and **John Wyss**. Both Mitch and John are seniors that exemplify all the qualities of academic and professional leadership that have become a tradition with members here at Alpha.

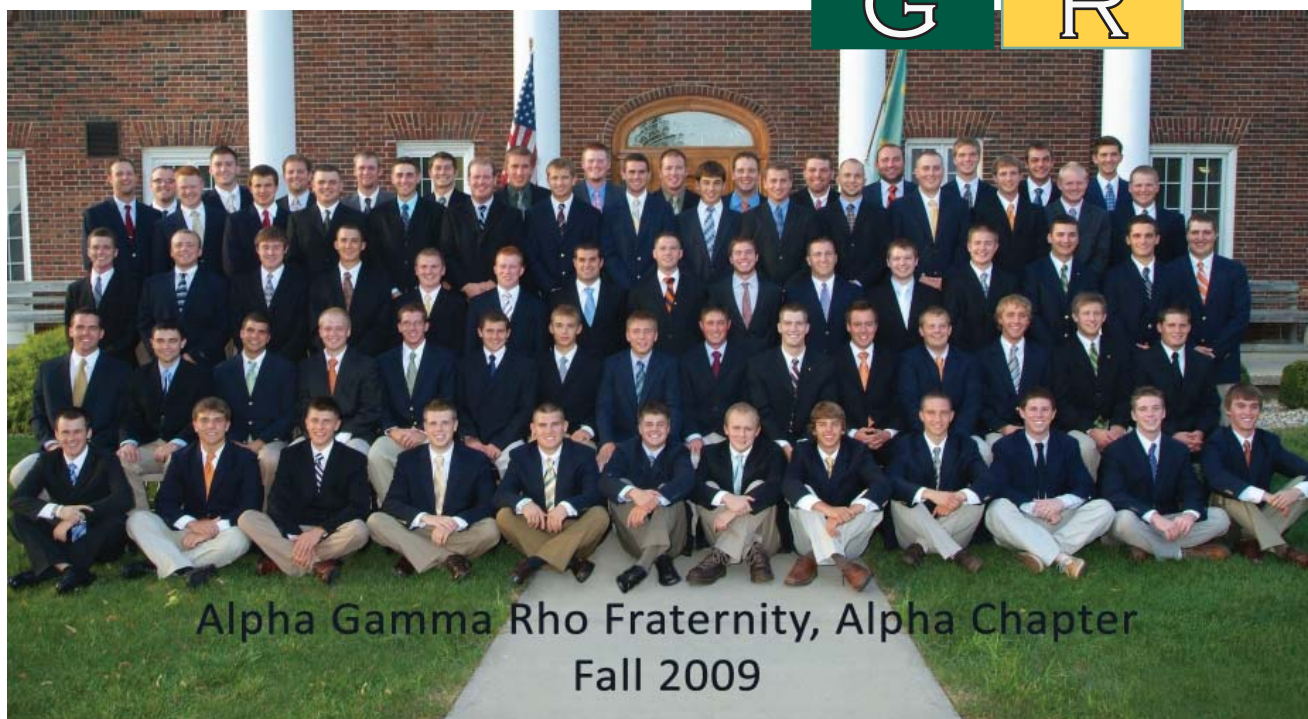
Throughout the academic year many leadership opportunities open up within the chapter and on the UI campus. Recently Alpha Chapter had two members take leadership roles on the Interfraternity Council. Sophomores **Ryan Giertz** and **Eddie Kahle** were elected to the IFC executive board as VP Risk Management and VP Recruitment. Having members on the IFC executive committee further exhibits the respect and reputation AGR holds within the fraternity system.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our Alumni for your continued support over the past year. Here at Alpha we take great pride in the chapter house, and without your continued support we would not be able to enjoy this amazing facility and all it has to offer. I would like to wish everyone and their families a safe and prosperous fall.

Fraternally,

Reid Thompson

Noble Ruler



HOMECOMING RECAP

*Written by Edward Kahle, Robert Clark and Jared Roskamp, 2009
Homecoming Co-Chairs*

The Illini had another depressing outing this past homecoming as we got steamrolled by the Michigan State Spartans. Another disappointment was the cancellation of the parade due to the rain. I still think that our float would have won hands down. Despite all of that, we want to thank the alumni that made it back to the chapter house this year. Alpha chapter saw one of the largest turnouts for homecoming since the 100th anniversary with over 70 alumni and family returning to enjoy the meal and an attempt at a football game.

The chapter house was open for tours and proudly displayed the newly remodeled chapter room including the three new couches, 52" plasma TV and state of the art sound system. We had also found some old slides while cleaning the basement that were on display in addition to some scrapbooks and record books from the 1940's and 1950's. Following the meal, there was a brief alumni board meeting which discussed the current conditions of the chapter and also some upcoming projects for the chapter house. Once again, thank you to all of the alumni who came and we hope to see more of you next year!

Photo captions: (top to bottom) Alumni gathering outside the house before the meal. Alumni and members enjoying the annual AGR homecoming meal and sharing stories at the Chapter House. Junior Class homecoming float: "State Can't Stop These Guns!"



VNR ALUMNI RELATIONS REMARKS *Written by Austin Verbeck*

As I reflect back upon my term over the past year of serving as VNR Alumni Relations for Alpha Chapter I become increasingly proud of everything that Alpha stands for. I realize that the active chapter's relationship with alumni has been "sub-par" over the past few years and it has been my personal objective to continuously build and improve that relationship.

Although we are still growing that relationship, we have taken significant strides in reaching goals over the past year. From hosting our Alumni Golf outing last spring in Gibson City to learning about all of the travel great travel experiences Brothers **Jim Gardner '64** and **Brian Morris '88** have shared with us, the future is bright for Alpha Chapter and its Alumni! Homecoming showed us that we were indeed becoming more connected with our Alumni by the excellent turnout that we had and the multiple compliments given to us by Alumni.

I am greatly appreciative of my time as Alpha Chapter's VNR Alumni Relations. I have seen first hand so many of the great things our Alumni are capable of and have accomplished. I would like to thank all of the Alumni that have made contributions for the Crescents over the past year and to those that came out to enjoy homecoming with us! It is with your generosity and continued support that we can continue to foster the excellence that Alpha creates in its members and ultimately... "To make better men".

THE NEW MEMBER CLASS OF 2013

After extensive recruitment efforts lead by Recruitment Chairs Eddie Kahle and Elias Klokenga, Alpha Chapter initiated 18 New Members into the undergraduate chapter including 15 freshman and 3 juniors. The New Members are becoming increasingly active within the chapter and on campus. We are all excited to see what great things these 18 men will do in their next four years!



Spencer Allen is a junior majoring in Crop Sciences, with a concentration in crop agribusiness. From Homer about twenty minutes east of Champaign, in high school he was in basketball, track and FFA. Spencer enjoys boating, fishing, riding motorcycles and snowmobiles, along with skiing, basically anything that involves being outdoors. He has worked on the family farm for the past six summers. At the University, Spencer is involved in Field and Furrow Club along with ACE club. He hopes to acquire a great education to assist him in pursuing a career in Chemical or Seed Sales.



Kirk Beutke grew up on a farm in Long Point. His brother and he showed cattle until his junior year of high school. He played football, basketball, and baseball in high school and was active in FFA, Student Council, National Honor Society, and 4-H. At Illinois, he wants to earn his bachelor degree in Ag Engineering and gain valuable leadership skills by being active in clubs.



Gage Braley is from Hettick and is pursuing a degree in Ag Engineering. He plans to be active in the chapter, as well as, in clubs on campus. He would ultimately like to earn a job for John Deere in the engineering field.



Adam Cross is from Emden and lives on a farm operated by his dad and uncle. He graduated from Hartsburg-Emden High School and is studying Agricultural and Consumer Economics with a concentration in Agribusiness Markets and Management. Adam is looking forward to the experiences he will have here at Illinois.



Christopher Devlin grew up on a corn/soybean farm outside of Ashland. In high school, he participated in almost every sport and club available. Chris is majoring in Ag Engineering and plans to study abroad and maintain James Scholar and Jonathan Baldwin Turner Scholar status. Upon graduation, He plans to seek a job with a large implement company.



Keith Dorwart attended high school in Waverly, where he was the president of both National Honor Society and French Club, an active member of the Science Club, and a three sport athlete participating in cross country, basketball, and track, and a captain for cross country and track. Keith is studying Political Science, and hopes to go into Law Enforcement, and eventually work for the F.B.I. after college.



Vaughn Duitsman is from Saint Joseph and grew up on a farm of corn and soybeans. In high school he was involved with many different clubs and played basketball and football. Vaughn's hobbies are golf and having a good time with his friends. When he graduates, he wants to get involved in the grain industry and trade grain futures.



Adam Johnson was raised in Streator and graduated high school in a class of 32 students. The youngest of four he is the first in his family to attend Illinois and to join Alpha Gamma Rho. Attendance at the U of I was not only a dream of his, but a major step in the right direction towards his future goals and ambitions of landing a business administration position with a large corporation and one day run his own

company. He hopes to make use of the many great organizations at the University throughout his educational career.



Christian Kilby is majoring in Agricultural & Biological Engineering and planning on working for John Deere someday. He grew up in Mackinaw, and attended Deer Creek-Mackinaw High School where he participated in football, basketball, and track and was active in Beta Club, Student Council, and FCCLA.



Russell Montgomery grew up in Litchfield. He was treasurer of his high school class and played on the golf team all four years. He stayed busy in high school with two jobs: working on a farm during summers and at RadioShack during winters. Currently studying Agricultural and Consumer Economics, Russ hopes to pursue a law degree after college.



Jordan Newell grew up in Williamsfield on a fairly large family corn and soybeans farm that set aside a few acres for hay to support their cattle operations. Jordan's family raises and shows premium show pigs. He is an Agricultural and Consumer Economics major with a concentration in Ag Finance and plans to be very active within the Chapter as well as many RSO's. After college he would like to work in the corporate agricultural world before eventually returning to the family farm.



Christopher Plunk grew up on a family farm near Mansfield and attended Blue Ridge High School. He was active in baseball, basketball, golf, and FFA serving as chapter reporter.

Chris enjoys racing ATVs, playing sports, fishing, and spending time with family and friends. He is a junior majoring in Crop Science with a concentration in Ag Business and involved with the Field and Furrow Club. Christ enjoys the science of agriculture and wants to pursue a career in seed or chemical sales with the hope of assisting in the growth of his family farm.



Kaleb Pruemer grew up near Shelbyville where they raised dairy and beef cattle and grew corn, beans, wheat and alfalfa. He graduated from Shelbyville High School, and is very interested in continuing in the cattle industry. He hopes to work with genetics or nutrition after graduating.



Gregory Sanders grew up near Herscher on a corn, soybean, and wheat production family farm. He is a graduate of Herscher High School, and was involved in FFA, National Honor Society, Math team, and Spanish club. Greg is majoring in Agricultural and Consumer Economics with a concentration in Farm Management, along with a minor in Crop Sciences. He feels that this combination will provide him with the well-rounded education he needs to go back and help his brother in continuing his family's farming operation.



Bob Schroeder is from Mahomet. He plans on becoming involved in several student organizations and learning how to become a productive grain producer while at school. After graduation, Bob plans to become a Farm Manager or work on his family's grain farm.



Mark Sturgeon grew up in the small town of Altona and was very active in 4H and FFA at ROWVA High

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: ERIC KAHLE

Written by Eric Kahle, Member #1228, Alpha Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho. Father to Eddie Kahle, Member #1897, Alpha Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho. Eric is a State Farm Agent in Taylorville and has been with State Farm for 24 years. He married Loretta Long, Chapter Sweetheart, and has three children. Eddie is a sophomore at U of I and Katie and Madelyn are at Taylorville High School. Eric is still involved in the family farm with his siblings including John Kahle, class of 1978. Loretta's brother Michael Long and cousin, Steven Lang, are also AGRs.

A little over a year ago, I was visiting with my son, Eddie, who was studying for his first new member test. (For you older Aggers, pledge test.) He asked me if I remembered the AGR Purpose. I quickly came up with "To make better men and through them a broader and better agriculture..." There was great comfort in knowing my son was learning the same important lessons I had three decades ago.

I needed this comfort, because you want your son to have the same great experience you had, despite all the changes at Alpha Chapter in the past 30 years. If you like change...AGR is for you, and if you don't like change AGR is for you.

The first big change is Formal Initiation takes place the first week of school. The good news is that new members still take the same valuable tests we took. I can't tell you how many times in my life, the Home town, County and Major Test has helped me find a common person during a discussion.

The impressive renovation of the house included accommodating sleeping in the rooms. The good news for those of you who remember your best sleep ever was in the cold dorms is... they kept the west dorm cold. Only the new members sleep in the cold air dorm creating an incubator for brotherhood. This allows the class to become much closer as a group as they unwind at the end of the day or make sure everyone is up for duties. (The House is still "spotless".)

Another change is that all fraternities hold their exchanges at local establishments and not in the houses. Dorm Parties with the Little Sisters or exchanges in the dining room were some of my best memories. Don't worry the same memories are being made, only the location has changed.

The two most important things have not changed... Great nicknames. Class of 1983 - Kurock, Weiny, Weed, Testy, and Squeaky and Class of 2012 - Frenchie, Denim Duewer, Baby Bumper, and T-pain. AND to finish: ALPHA Chapter of Alpha Gamma is still making "Better Men and through them a better and broader agriculture."

School. He went to Black Hawk East and was involved in the livestock team there. Mark is a junior and plans on attending graduate school and in animal nutrition or reproduction focusing on embryo transfer.



Ethan Ward is from Prophetstown and hopes to become a leader within the house and other clubs that he joins. He also hopes to attend graduate school and become a veterinarian.



Justin Wassmann grew up on a 1,900 acre corn and soybeans, and show steers family farm in Waterman. He loves sports and was pretty good at them in high school and even set a couple of school records. He was involved in several different clubs and was an officer for three years in FFA. His church kept him busy on the weekends too, as he was the president of their youth group. Justin is looking forward to bettering his education and narrowing down a career path that he wishes to pursue.

AGR 40 YEAR CLASS REUNION *Written by Jim Wright '69*



photos: (left to right) Class picture in front of the house. NR Reid Thompson and Alumni tour the renovated chapter room. AGR 40th reunion tour of the house. Alumni outside of the ACES Library

Thirteen members of the class of 1968 and seven members of the class of 1969 plus two guests and various spouses met on August 28 and 29 in Champaign. The weekend started Friday night at the Hilton Garden Inn with lots of stories and catching up. Saturday morning the College of ACES provided two buses and Tina Veal, the alumni coordinator, for a tour of the campus.



We started at the House and were well greeted by the Officers and several actives. The house looks good but as **Dave Culbertson**, a current Alumni Board member, pointed out there are several projects that need to be planned for and completed. The next stop was Bevier Hall and the Food Science Laboratory. The highlight there was **Randy Erwin** and **Phil Frances** talking about their being the first ever male students in a food prep course. Randy's story concerning his selecting a female lab partner somehow involved her long legs and short skirts! And they all aced the course!

Lunch was served in the Spice Box which had recently been remodeled thanks to the generous donation of Nita and Phil Francis. The afternoon included a visit to the "new" 2002 ACES Library and Alumni Center. Of special interest there was a room dedicated to **Ralph Allen Sr.** a graduate of the class of 1876. **Gene Zumwalt '70** is Ralph's great grandson and had presented the original sheep skin diploma to the University Archives. A replica diploma was on the wall and not only listed each course completed but also the grade received! Gene said Ralph had ten children and all of them attended the University of Illinois.

We next took a drive by the new South Farms and some of the livestock facilities before heading to Memorial Stadium for a tour of the new sky boxes, football field and weight room. **Roger Jennings** and **Kent Redfern** host-

everyone in their suite for drinks before heading back to the Hotel.

Saturday evening included a banquet and special remembrances of the five Brothers of the class of 1968 who had passed away. Many other great stories (some of which may be true) were shared.

Brothers' presents from the class of 1968 were: **Phil Francis, Rex Piper, Dan Reznicek, Ross Peter, Jim Klockenga, Randy Erwin, Lynn Ash, Tom Hunsley, Tom Doubet, Ken Kahle, Larry Krusemark, Kent Riewerts, Kent Redfern** and **Dave Hawkinson**. Class of 1969 was: **Dave Culbertson, Tom Champley, Rich Hansen, Bill Wills, Roger Jennings, Gene Zumwalt** and **Jim Wright**.

Dave '67 and **Anne Bechtel** were special guests in appreciation of the help Dave did to organize the weekend. **Lynn Watson '64** also attended.

AGR 50 YEAR CLASS REUNION



Front Row: George Anselm, Dale Hedrick, Joe Helms, Dale Helms

Second Row: Wayne Heberer, Wayne Carmichael, Howard Perry, Robert Martin, Wayne Rehn, Phil Phar, Kenneth Hunt, David Ash, Laverne Gillespie and John Curtin

On August 28 twenty-seven members of Alpha Chapter's 50 year graduating class along with members of the 1955-56 pledge class held their 50th Class reunion party. The event was held at the home of **Wayne Rehn '59** with dinner being served by **Jim Hankes '75**.

CIRCLE OF LIFE

ENGAGEMENTS:

Benjamin Kuhns '08 is engaged to Jessica Nichols

Ryan Robinson '08 is engaged to Brittney Foulk

MARRIAGES:

Scott Van Etten '08 married Ashley Bender

DEATHS:

Scott Hill Shuman '88 passed away on May 16, 2009

Steven Wendell '69 passed away on September 3, 2009



HONORING BROTHER WENDELL

Written by Dave Bechtel '67

What does it mean to be an AGR ... a real "Brother" with a capital "B"? Several were witness to one sad definition at the funeral of our brother **Steve Wendell**, Class of 1969, this past month. Steve was killed in a tragic farm accident and six of his classmate fraternity brothers (**Dave Culbertson**, **Dave Nelson**, **Duane Curry**, **Rich Hansen**, **Tom Cham-pley** and **Jim Wright**) stood up for their brother one last time as his pallbearers. Another classmate, **Gene Zumwalt**, came all the way from Madison, Wisconsin and another brother, **Ed Foley**, from Minneapolis, Minnesota to honor Steve's memory. Steve, 62, is survived by his wife, Cindy, and grown children, Lawren, Dawn, Heather and Angela. Cindy and he had seven grandchildren. The funeral was in Farmer City and burial is in a rural DeWitt cemetery near the old family farm.

Steve was an officer in the House while an undergrad, on the livestock judging team and President of the campus' Hoof and Horn Club. He was also a member of the Board and a past President of the Alpha chapter Alumni Association.

Our classmate fraternity brothers are most often our groomsmen at weddings as they are most involved in that stage of our lives. So, too, for Steve as Sue Foley, Ed's wife introduced him to Cindy, her high school friend. The connection between Steve and his classmate Brothers goes well beyond the early stages of his life. Dave Culbertson gave one of the eulogies and recounted the days in the House when Steve garnered the nickname of "Winky" for falling asleep on phone duty and of bonding experiences on senior floor. Dave also related that his class, Steve's class, gathered every summer since graduation, first with new wives and then with their children, watching each others sons and daughters grow up and have families of their own.

It is sometimes said, "The measure of a man is the depth and breadth of his friendships". If that be true, then Steve "Wink" Wendell was a mighty man for the devotion he engendered in a very special group of Brothers who came together in the AGR House in the 60's and were with him to the end!

ALPHA GAMMA RHO, ALPHA CHAPTER

**58 EAST GREGORY DRIVE
CHAMPAIGN IL 61820**

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CALENDAR

December 11-18 – Final Exams

January 19, 2010 – Spring
Semester begins

March 13-21 – Spring break

May 16 – Commencement



Alumni Board

President

Timothy J Roth.....217-351-9172/tjroth@keysoftgroup.com

Advisors

Matt Barnard.....217-417-7699/mbarnard@wyffels.com

Chapter Officers

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VNR Finance: **Ethan Koch**.....koch1@illinois.edu

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Alpha's homepage is www.aggers.com

AGR National's homepage is www.alphagammarho.org

The Alpha Crescent was written and coordinated by Austin Verbeck. Editing and design by Donna Foley.

ALUMNI DATABASE UPDATE—

We need your help. Please provide updates for your information or any brother's information that you might have. Please return it in the mail or email to averbec2@illinois.edu.

If you are a widow of a brother of AGR and would like to stop receiving AGR mailings, please indicate so when you return this form.

Also, please let us know if you would like to be a mentor to an undergraduate or a part of our Professional Development Programs.

Please email averbec2@illinois.edu or return this form to:

Austin Verbeck Alpha Gamma Rho
58 East Gregory Drive Champaign, IL 61820

Name: _____ Grad Yr: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work: _____

Cell: _____